

B3 permeable and liquid-impermeable surface layers and said absorbent body extending along an intermediate crotch portion between first and second end portions;

a liquid barrier extending in the longitudinal direction essentially parallel to said edges of said absorbent body and having a free edge;

a side flap extending in the longitudinal direction outside the liquid barrier and comprising part of at least one of the liquid-permeable and liquid-impermeable surface layers; and

a single elastic element extending in the longitudinal direction connecting an area adjacent the free edge of the liquid barrier and the side flap.--

REMARKS

Claims 1-8 were previously pending in the application. New claims 9-19 are added. Therefore, claims 1-19 are presented for consideration.

Claims 1-8 are amended to address the 35 USC §112, second paragraph rejections noted in the Official Action.

Claims 1-5 and 8 are rejected as anticipated by MARTIN 6,186,996.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested because the reference does not disclose or suggest elastic elements extending in a longitudinal direction and fastened to only one of a liquid barrier and a side flap.

By way of example, Figure 3 of the present application shows an elastic element 11 extending in the longitudinal direction along axis 27 and fastened only to liquid barrier 5. Figure 4 of the present application shows elastic element 14 extending in the longitudinal direction along axis 27 and fastened only to side flap 3. Accordingly, the elastic member is either connected to the liquid barrier or the side flap, but not both.

In contrast, Figure 4 of MARTIN, for example, shows elastic member 10 fastened to side flap (near 10) and elastic members 16 and 17 fastened to internal covering sheet 3 (liquid barrier). Accordingly, MARTIN teaches elastic elements fastened to both the liquid barrier and to the side flaps, not only one of the liquid barrier and the side flaps as recited in claim 1 of the present application.

In addition, claim 1 of the present application further recites that each liquid barrier is, at least in the crotch portion of the product, in a region between an attachment to the absorbent product and each free edge, fixed to an adjacent side flap outside the edges of the absorbent body.

By way of example, Figure 3 of the present application shows liquid barrier 5 is, in the crotch portion 12 of the product 1 in a region between an attachment 9 to the absorbent product and the free edge 7, fixed to an adjacent side flap 3 outside the edges of the absorbent body 6.

MARTIN teaches in Figures 3, 4 and 5, for example, longitudinal flaps 28, 28' and 28'', respectively. These longitudinal flaps are connected to the liquid barrier 3 at 26, 26' and 26'', respectively. Accordingly, the longitudinal flaps are connected to the liquid barriers. MARTIN does not disclose or suggest that the liquid barrier is fixed to the side flap. Further, the connections 26, 26' and 26'' are inside the edges of the absorbent body, not outside the edges of the absorbent body in a region between the attachment to the absorbent product and the free edge as recited in claim 1 of the present application.

As the reference does not disclose that which is recited, the anticipation rejection is not viable. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

Claims 6 and 7 are rejected as unpatentable over MARTIN in view of YAMAMOTO et al. 5,607,416. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

YAMAMOTO et al. is cited for the teaching of both a liquid barrier and side flaps comprising a liquid-permeable surface layer and a liquid-impermeable surface layer. YAMAMOTO et al. do not teach or suggest what is recited in claim 1. As set forth above, MARTIN does not disclose or suggest what is recited in claim 1. Since claims 6 and 7 depend from claim 1 and further define the invention, the combination of references would not render obvious claims 6 and 7.

In addition, YAMAMOTO et al. do not teach that for which it is offered. Specifically, column 3, lines 29-35 of YAMAMOTO et al. teach liquid-permeable and liquid-impermeable sheets 3 and 4 and side flaps 6, 7 as best seen in Figure 4. Element 11 indicated in the Official Action as a side flap is disclosed on column 3, lines 63-65 of YAMAMOTO et al. as a line along which side flap 7 is folded. Accordingly, they are not two separate elements (liquid barriers and side flaps) as indicated in the Official Action, but a single element side flap 7 having fold 11.

New claim 9 also recites elastic elements extending in a longitudinal direction and fastened to only one of the liquid barriers and the side flaps. The comments above regarding claim 1 are equally applicable to claim 9. Claims 10-18 depend from claim 9 and further define the invention and are also believed patentable over the cited prior art.

New claim 19 includes a single elastic element. MARTIN teaches a plurality of elastic elements as set forth above.

Accordingly, it is believed that the new claims avoid the rejections under §102 and §103 and are allowable over the art of record.

In view of the present amendment and the foregoing remarks, it is believed that the present application has been placed in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

MAGNUSSON et al. S.N. 09/981,894

Attached hereto is a marked-up version showing the changes made to the claims. The attached page is captioned "VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE."

Respectfully submitted,

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"VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE"

IN THE CLAIMS:

Claim 1 has been amended as follows:

--1. (amended) Absorbent product having a longitudinal direction and a transverse direction and comprising:

a front and a rear end portion [(8, 10)],

an intermediate crotch portion [(12)],

edges extending in the longitudinal direction and in the transverse direction,

an upper, liquid-permeable surface layer [(2)],

a lower, liquid-impermeable surface layer [(4)],

an absorbent body [(6)] arranged between the surface layers [(2, 4)] and comprising edges in the longitudinal direction and in the transverse direction,

liquid barriers [(5)] extending in the longitudinal direction arranged essentially parallel to those edges of the product running in the longitudinal direction, the liquid barriers [(5)] each having a free edge [(7)],

side flaps [(3)] extending in the longitudinal direction outside the liquid barriers [(5)] and comprising parts of at least one of the surface layers [(2, 4)], and

elastic elements [(11; 14; 30)] extending in the longitudinal direction and fastened to only one of the liquid barriers [(5) or to] and the side flaps [(3)], the liquid-permeable surface layer [(2)] extending in the longitudinal

direction of the product at least between the liquid barriers [(5)],

[characterized in that] wherein each liquid barrier [(5)] is, at least in the crotch portion [(12)] of the product, in [the] a region between [its] an attachment [(9)] to the absorbent product and [its] each said free edge [(7)], fixed to the adjacent side flap [(3)] outside the edges of the absorbent body [(6)], as a result of which the product has double raised leakage barriers arranged along the edges extending in the longitudinal direction.--

Claim 5 has been amended as follows:

--5. (twice amended) Absorbent product according to claim 1, wherein the side flaps [(3) comprising] comprise parts of the liquid-permeable surface layer [material (2)].--

Claim 6 has been amended as follows:

--6. (twice amended) Absorbent product according to claim 1, wherein both the side flaps [(3)] and the liquid barriers [(5) comprising] comprise parts of the liquid-permeable surface layer [material (2)].--

Claim 7 has been amended as follows:

--7. (twice amended) Absorbent product according to claim 1, wherein both the liquid barriers [(5)] and the side flaps [(3) comprising] comprise parts of the liquid-impermeable surface layer [material (4)].--

Claim 8 has been amended as follows:

--8. (twice amended) Absorbent product according to claim 1, wherein the side flaps [(3) comprising] comprise parts of the liquid-impermeable surface layer [material (4)].--